

Mystery Man of the White House

by Carol Dunlap



Who's this man? He's Army Lt. Jonathan Rose, a White House lawyer with a physical disability. Photo was taken when he was a student at Yale.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Several weeks ago at a White House press conference, Vera Glaser of the Knight Newspapers asked President Nixon the following question:

"Sir, according to published reports, Army Lt. Jonathan Rose, who is the son of a former high Eisenhower Administration official and a Republican Party campaign contributor, is serving on duty here in the White House at your request and has served for two years rather than being assigned to active duty. Now the Pentagon will not tell us why. But I wondered whether you will tell us what his expertise is that makes him so valuable to the White House."

Not particularly happy at being asked that question, the President did not lose his cool. He explained: "First, he's (Rose) a very competent lawyer, but we have other competent lawyers, excluding of course the President in the White House. But the other reason—and in fairness to Mr. Rose and I'm sorry that

such a personal thing has to be brought up, but I know he would want the record clarified. He has a physical disability, an injury to his shoulder which disqualifies him from active combat duty. . . . That's why he's here. And I'm very glad that a man with that kind of disability—there's nothing wrong with his brain—is available at the White House as one of our best young lawyers."

He plays tennis

Following this exchange, several members of the press corps recalled seeing Rose play tennis at the White House, and playing well (it's his left shoulder which is dislocated not his right), and they began inquiring: "Who is this guy? To whom is he assigned at the White House? What does he do?"

First Lt. Jonathan C. Rose, 29, is a U.S. Army intelligence officer with a difference. Instead of waging counter-insurgency warfare against the National Liberation Front in South Vietnam, his assignment is to lobby for holding actions in Congress against the consumer crusade of Ralph Nader.

Ever since Rose started a two-year tour of active duty in June, 1969, he has been attached to the personal staff of the Commander in Chief himself: President Richard Nixon. According to an unusual but not unprecedented arrangement with the Pentagon, Rose is fulfilling his military obligation out of uniform on special detail to the Execu-



Vera Glaser, of Knight Newspapers: she asked the President about Rose's job.

tive Branch.

Boss is Flanigan

His immediate superior is Peter M. Flanigan of Greenwich, Conn., an influential Nixon aide who screens candidates for Presidential appointments and who is also responsible for the Administration's relations with the business world. His father, "Hap" Flanigan, was head of the Manufacturers Trust Bank.

Rose keeps the lowest of profiles and studiously avoids the press.

But he has been very busy behind the scenes both at the White House and on Capitol Hill. Reportedly, he helped conduct the Administration's efforts to kill legislation that would have established an independent consumer protection agency.

Flanigan's office is said to have detailed Rose to keep an eye on the activities and statements of Mrs. Virginia Knauer, the President's special assistant for consumer affairs. Apparently the White House feels Mrs. Knauer needs some guidance lest she lean too far in certain directions—and Rose frequently provides that guidance.

The stocky, jut-jawed, articulate lieutenant identifies himself as a moderate Republican. In 1964 he worked in William Scranton's eleventh-hour campaign to stop Barry Goldwater from winning the GOP nomination at the Cow Palace in San Francisco. Four years later he worked for Nixon.

Rose's education is strictly Eastern Establishment. He went to prep school at Hotchkiss, Class of '59, where he was voted by the faculty the outstanding member of his class; college at Yale, Class of '63, where he was editor of the *Yale Daily News* and a member of the prestigious secret senior society, Skull and Bones; and law school at Harvard, Class of '67 where he was a member of the Army ROTC. Between his graduation from Harvard Law School and the beginning of his full-time political career he served as a clerk for the Honorable R. Ammi Cutter of the Supreme Judicial Court in Boston, Mass. Says Judge Cutter: "He did superb work for me, excellent work, but insofar as I know, he has never been in private practice."

Important dad

Rose's family background helps explain why Nixon holds him in such high regard. Jonathan's father, H. Chapman Rose, is a soft-spoken but high-powered Cleveland lawyer (Jones, Day, Cockley & Reavis) who was a Treasury undersecretary to another Cleveland during the Eisenhower Administration, George Humphrey.

The elder Rose has been a pillar of the Republican Party in the Middle West and a major long-time Republican fund-raiser as well as a substantial personal contributor to the Nixon campaign coffers.

For many years the younger Rose has been a friend of Julia Dempsey Cox who last year became the sister-in-law of Edward Cox. Through Julia Dempsey Cox, who also comes from Cleveland, Rose has been introduced to the young Washington social set of Tricia Nixon and Edward Cox who were married yesterday.

Rose was scheduled to leave the Army in May but extended his tour of duty one month. He should be getting out of the White House any day now if he hasn't already.



Consumer watchdog Ralph Nader has been object of Rose's concern, and so has Mrs. Virginia Knauer, Nixon's special assistant for consumer affairs.